

Public Affairs Office  
2722 S. Topeka Blvd.  
Rm 108  
Topeka, KS 66611



Phone: 785-274-1192  
Cell: 785-806-4063  
Email: [Sharon.Watson3@us.army.mil](mailto:Sharon.Watson3@us.army.mil)  
[www.kansastag.gov](http://www.kansastag.gov)

Maj. Gen. (KS) Lee Tafanelli, Adjutant General  
Kansas Army National Guard  
Kansas Air National Guard  
Kansas Division of Emergency Management  
Kansas Homeland Security  
Kansas Civil Air Patrol

**CONTACT: Sharon Watson**  
Director, Public Affairs  
Phone: (785) 274-1192  
Cell: (785) 806-4063

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## **Kansas Officials Plan for Ongoing Response Needs to Flooding**

The flooding along the Missouri River extends from North Dakota to Doniphan and Atchison counties in Kansas and reveals a challenge state officials believe will remain for several more months.

Maj. Gen. (KS) Lee Tafanelli, Kansas Adjutant General and director of Kansas Division of Emergency Management; Robin Jennison, secretary of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism; and Tracy Streeter, director of Kansas Water Office, took part in an aerial tour of the Missouri River at Gavins Point in South Dakota this week as part of the state's ongoing efforts to determine what state support is needed by the affected counties.

To manage flooding along the Missouri River from North Dakota to the Kansas City area, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers increased the release of water from the levee at Gavins Point and as well as a number of other levees.

The tour provided the opportunity for Tafanelli, Jennison and Streeter to see firsthand the flood damage on the Missouri River north of Doniphan County, where flood preparations and voluntary evacuations have been in place for several weeks.

"The impact of the flooding on homes, farms, businesses and wildlife along the Missouri River are a big concern and we are watching this very closely to see what additional support is needed from the state," said Tafanelli.

The U.S. Coast Guard has closed the Missouri River to all vessel traffic, including vessels used for fishing and recreation, from mile marker 386 located downstream of Leavenworth, northward to mile marker 811 near Gavins Point Dam in Yankton, S. D. Mile marker 386 is about one-half river-mile downstream of the Archer Daniels Midland/Growmark grain elevator located on the Kansas side of the river.

“For their safety and the safety of emergency personnel who could be called to their rescue, it is vital that people avoid the dangerous flooding on the Missouri River,” Jennison added,

The flooding issues along the Missouri River are expected to last into the fall and possibly winter.

“Tributary flows entering the river below Gavins Point are exacerbating our problems in Kansas,” said Streeter. “We hope that rainfall in the upper basin will subside as well, and allow the corps to begin reducing the releases from Gavins Point sooner than anticipated,” Streeter added.

Kansas Division of Emergency Management remains in contact with emergency management officials in Doniphan, Atchison, Leavenworth and Wyandotte Counties to coordinate state response measures to flooding issues along the Missouri River.

An Incident Management Team remains in Doniphan County at the Elwood Fire Department. The team is engaged in operations and logistics and act as liaisons to the State Emergency Operations Center in Topeka.

The Kansas National Guard still has Guardsmen in Doniphan County patrolling the levees to look for sand boils and breaches and to conduct security patrols. Their mission has been extended to cover portions of Wathena, as well as Elwood. The Guardsmen will remain on duty until the voluntary evacuation order has been lifted.

In Doniphan County, several homes and businesses could potentially be affected by flooding. In Atchison County, homes and businesses south of the city of Atchison have been impacted. Rail lines were washed out along the river and more than 3,000 acres of agricultural land have been affected by two levees that overtopped and flooded the area.

In Leavenworth County, the levees overtopped, resulting in parks being under 10-12 feet of water. The animal shelter had 3.5 feet of water in the building earlier this week.

In Wyandotte County, flooding from three levees overtopping impacted the Lakeside Speedway and the Kansas City Police Department.